#158
April 2026

The CRAZY WISDOM Monthly

Ken Kozora

musician, composer, and educator

Find the story on Page 26

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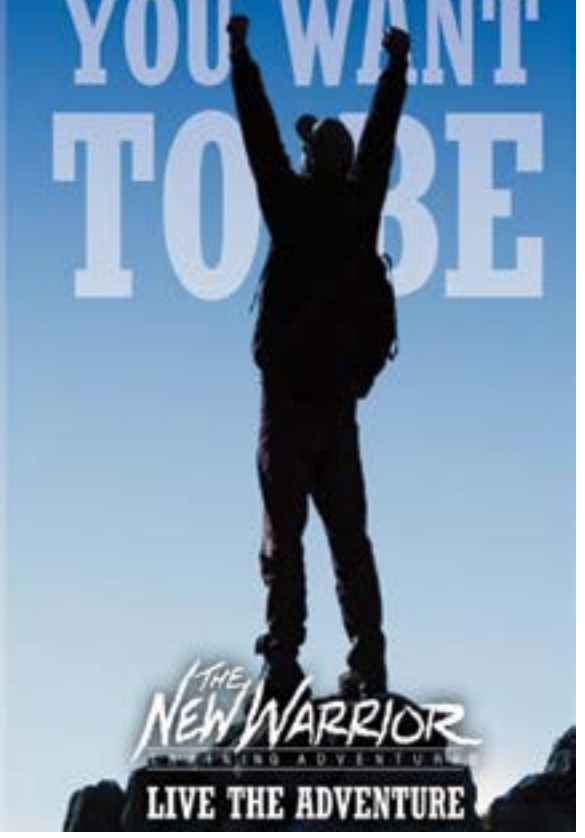

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THE CRAZY WISDOM SALON SERIES

SAGE WOMEN OF ANN ARBOR

in conversation with Bill Zirinsky

An Evening with Wasentha Young

April 15th at 7:00 p.m

Wasentha Young has been a practitioner and teacher of Tai Chi for more than 50 years, and she also teaches Qigong and Meditation. She started Ann Arbor's Peaceful Dragon School in 1990 and was a founding board member of the Association of Women Martial Arts Instructors. Peaceful Dragon offers programs in the martial arts, but also in meditation, acupressure, and the healing arts. She is also an accomplished mosaic artist and poet, and she has a master's degree in Transpersonal Psychology.

An Evening with Haju Sunim

April 22 at 7:00 p.m.

Rev. Haju Sunim has been the Resident Priest at the local Zen Buddhist Temple for decades. She was ordained as a Dharma teacher in 1984, and as a Buddhist priest in 1993. She hails from Vancouver, British Columbia. Haju Sunim will talk about the Zen path, the evolution of the Zen Temple over the last 40+ years, and her own life's journey.

All salons take place at the Crazy Wisdom Celestial Lounge and are FREE to attend. For more information, contact Bill at: billz@crazywisdom.net.

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Tana Dean
Carol Karr
Bill Zirinsky

Born during the pandemic, *The Crazy Wisdom Monthly* seeks to represent the voices of our community in a timely and entertaining manner. We welcome articles, interviews, recipes, wisdom, personal essays, poetry, breathing exercises, beautiful art and photos, favorite places for walks, news announcements, or musings on current events. Send your submission to Jennifer@crazywisdom.net.

Word of the Month

Sillage

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On the Cover

Ken Kozora, Ann Arbor musician, composer, and educator.
Photo taken by Susan Ayer.

Our Summer issue is nearly here!

The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal

Features

issue 92

• Keeping the Faith • Architectural Resource • Summer Road Trip • Plants and Breath • Hypermobility...and more!

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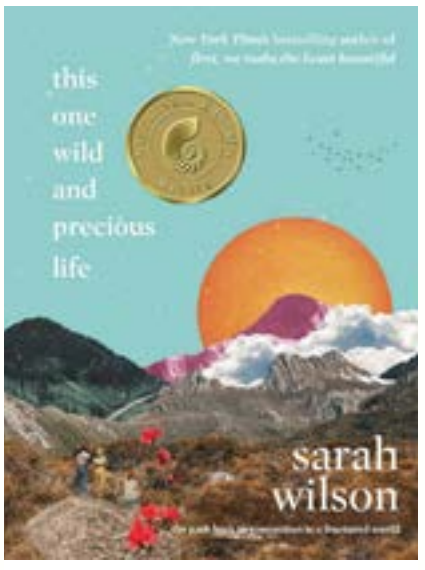
CW Book Picks *of the month*

What is the word for craving a relationship with the earth, plants, rocks, and stars? What do you call someone who finds their spirit sparked by these relationships; whose concept of the sacred is altered by the scent of jasmine in bloom or the deep indigo of a sky awaiting nightfall? We're taught that doctors know our bodies and priests know our souls. But what if you're a person seeking to understand both for yourself without an intermediary? What is the word for these feelings and the person we become when we honor them?

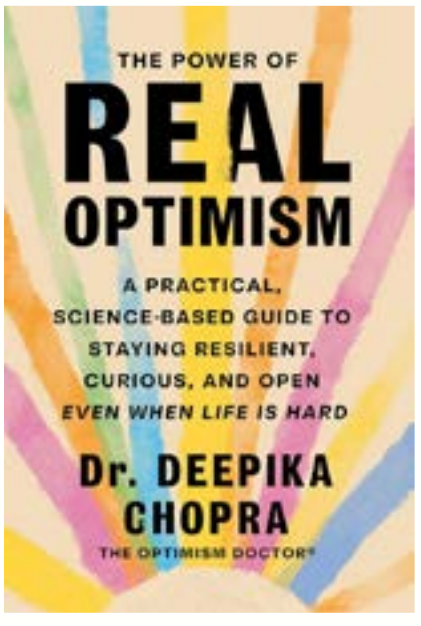
For writer Maia Toll, that word is magic. Magic points to something intrinsic to, and necessary for, the wholeness of the human spirit. It's a marker for the gnawing craving for a connection which includes, but also stretches beyond, the human realm. The exploration of this word was part of her search for both personal empowerment and a sense of cosmic connectedness, the yin and yang of our lives. In Letting Magic In Maia shares the story of her own magical becoming—from the untimely death of a friend that leads her to abandon Brooklyn in favor of the small town of Beacon, NY, to taking a yearlong sabbatical of exploration, and finally to Ireland, where she studied under an herbalist and learned the true magic of listening to the earth itself.

This book is the story of one woman's becoming—the story of pushing past the boundaries of what once seemed possible to discover the extraordinary all around us. In it Maia shares how she learned to let magic in so she could live the life she longed for—one filled with curiosity, connection, and the deepest kind of inner knowing. In this soulfully written recollection—peppered throughout with magical learnings and rituals gathered along the way—Maia uncovers the things that change you in unexpected ways and guide you to become the person you never knew you wanted to be, but perhaps, always were.

This she could call magic.



Many of us are living with the sense that things are not right with the world and are in a state of spiritual PTSD. We have retreated, morally and psychologically; we are experiencing a crisis of disconnection—from one another, from our true values, from joy, and from life as we feel we are meant to be living it. Sarah Wilson argues that this sense of despair and disconnection is ironically what unites us—that deep down, we are all feeling that same itch for a new way of living. Drawing on science, literature, philosophy and the wisdom of some of the world's leading experts, and her personal journey, Wilson offers a hopeful path forward to the life we love. En route, she shows us how to wake up and reconnect with life using "wild practices."



Optimism isn't about pretending everything is fine. It's about staying open and flexible—especially when it's not. In this fresh, science-backed debut, professional psychologist and media expert Dr. Deepika Chopra shows us how to build the kind of optimism that can actually withstand real life.

We've been sold the idea that optimism is a mood, a mindset, or worse—just an inherent trait. But what if real optimism is something else entirely?

In The Power of Real Optimism, Dr. Deepika Chopra—known as The Optimism Doctor®—offers a radically different definition: optimism as a science, a skill, and a psychological muscle we can strengthen. Drawing from over a decade immersed in the science of resilience, emotional well-being, and cognitive psychology—as well as her work with clients, innovative workshops, and hallmark practices (think: evidence-based visualization, narrative reframing, her signature "self-worth work," and even color therapy)—Dr. Chopra offers a toolkit for navigating the chaos, uncertainty, and nuance of being human—without losing yourself to it.

Grounded, practical, and poetic in all the right ways, this book will challenge your relationship with hope, rewire how you recover from hard things, and invite you to stay soft without falling apart. With her blend of intimate storytelling, psychological insight, and tangible tools—including a 33-day Real Optimism Challenge—Dr. Chopra offers something far more enduring than a quick fix or fleeting affirmation. She invites us into a deeper, more resilient way of living—one where we can stay curious in the face of fear, open in the face of grief, and grounded even as the world wobbles beneath us.

Because real optimism doesn't deny the dark—it teaches us how to see in it.

Renewal

By Katherine Munter

"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop away from you like the leaves of Autumn." -John Muir

I sat with my nose in a math book, trying to study as numbers swirled like autumn leaves in the wind. I had a quiz in the morning, and I knew I didn't have many points to spare. Lightning brightened my room, and I quietly counted in my head, measuring the space between the flash and the thunder. One… two… three… the storm's grumble roared through the room, vibrating the lamp on my desk.

As I turned back to my book, I heard a tap on the window. I stiffened, imagining an ominous creature lurking outside, knocking on the pane. Just as I relaxed, assuring myself the wind was blowing rain against the glass, there was another tap. With caution, I approached the window and peered out into the storm. Lightning flashed, illuminating the face of my friend. Smiling, I opened it to let him in. Instead, he encouraged me to follow him out, into the storm.

More lightning flashed. Swaying tree branches beckoned me to join them. It was early spring, and the few warmer days we'd had were giving way to a rush of cold wind. Last autumn's leaves were lifted and tossed by gusts before heavy raindrops knocked them back to the ground. Thunder boomed, and my fear came rolling out in giggles as I watched my friend shake his rain-soaked hair.

He reached a dripping hand through the window, and I initially shrunk back when I felt his damp skin. I was torn between the part of me that wanted to stay cozy and dry, and the part of me that wanted to run into the spring bluster. Releasing my studying to the wind, I pulled on shoes and climbed out the window.

Heavy rain instantly drenched my clothes, and I was invigorated by the earthy smell of petrichor. As though we were alone in world, we gleefully laughed as we ran up the street, splashing in puddles and raising our arms to the sky. Flashes of light reflected off the wet ground, where water formed little rivers and raced downhill. Fingers of rain massaged my skin and washed away my cares.

As a child, I often pretended to be John Muir as I adventured into the forest behind our house. Immersed in the present moment, I approached the woods with curiosity and reverence. I was inspired by the way he leaned into storms, embracing sensation. His words helped me to learn that my own place is not so separate from the world around me, and that in nature, I could find peace. Adult life often pulls my thoughts toward compiling stressors. Deadlines and pressures have grown louder than the relative quiet of the woods, and it's become easy to lose my footing in to-do lists.

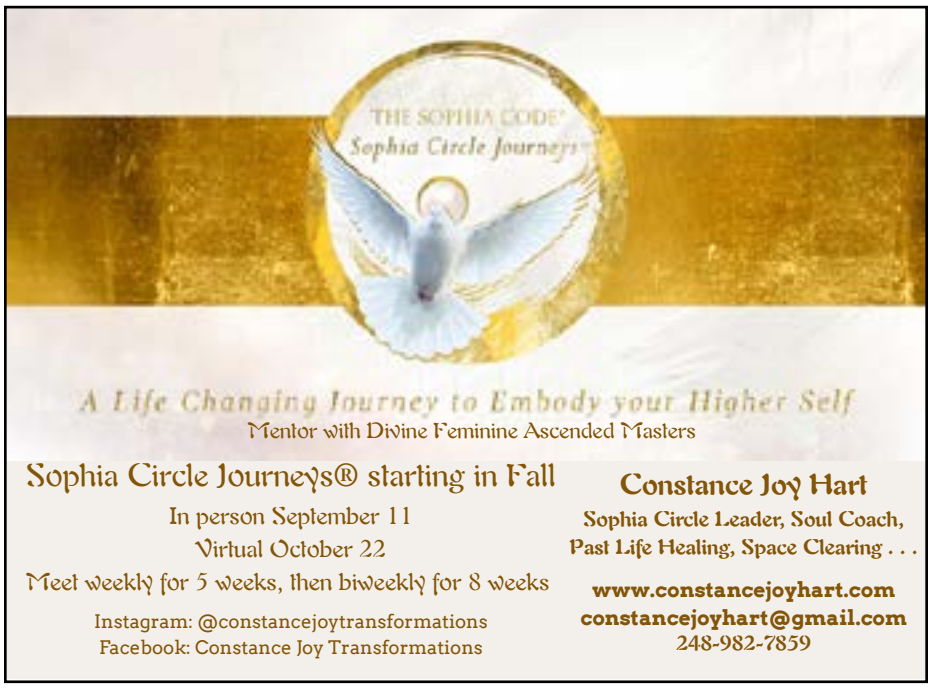
Sometimes, though, my curiosity cuts through my day-to-day noise. Becoming a mother and watching my children's awe at the natural world has been a powerful reminder to step back, ground myself, become playful, and just be. Through my children's eyes, I re-experience the joy of walking in a midday rainstorm, not holding back but rather embracing the moment, lifting our arms to the sky and allowing the droplets to wash our faces.

That math test I was studying for… decades ago? I don't recall whether I passed it; my grade has been lost to time. In any case, I graduated, and what I do vividly remember, as though it was yesterday, are moments like the time I jumped out my window into the rain.

Nature is a powerful teacher and healer. Spring is a time of rebirth, of growth after the restful hibernation of winter. I remind myself to allow moments of presence and joy to burst into my days, like a crocus breaking through the frozen ground.

What lessons do you want to lean into, during this time of growth and renewal?

-Katherine Munter, clinical psychologist, art therapist, and founder of Creative Life Therapy, an Ann Arbor practice of art therapy and integrative wellbeing. Learn more at www.CreativeLifeTherapy.com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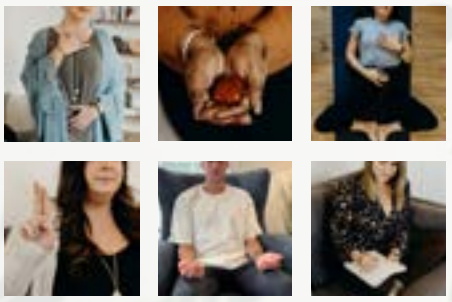

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Eve Wilson is a UCM Master Healer with 40 years experience helping couples and families to succeed in the fullest ways as individuals and together.

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Voices of this Region's Conscious Living Community Videocast Interviews on crazywisdomjournal.com

**View complete interviews from Crazy Wisdom's Salon Series —
The Sages of Ann Arbor — as well as other interesting and informative interviews with community leaders.**

**Interviews newly posted are with Dr. Dennis Chernin, Lisa Gottlieb, Dr. Jay Sandweiss, and Demo Rinpoche.
These public "conversations" in the Crazy Wisdom Lounge are moderated by Bill Zirinsky,
longtime Editorial Director of the *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal.*
Check back as new interviews will be posted periodically!**

Demo Rinpoche, a Tibetan Buddhist monk and incarnate lama, leads Jewel Heart, the Ann Arbor-based Tibetan Buddhist Center, recognized nationally and internationally as a center of Buddhist teaching. Demo Rinpoche has spent most of his life studying in monasteries in India with thousands of other monks, and under the Dalai Lama's direct supervision.

One of the wise men of integrative medicine in this region, Dr. Dennis Chernin (and Dr. Lev Linkner) founded the Parkway Center, the original and pre-eminent clinic for practitioners of complementary, holistic, and integrative medicine in Ann Arbor. Dr. Chernin now offers Homeopathic, Holistic and Preventive Medicine Consulting.

One of Ann Arbor's modern-era renaissance women, Lisa Gottlieb has been a leader in the community for decades. In recent years she's been deeply involved in Nonviolent Communication, as a certified trainer, and as the Founder and Director of Compassionate Communication of Ann Arbor.

Physician and skilled raconteur, Dr. Jay Sandweiss is one of the best-known and most respected integrative physicians in the region. Dr. Sandweiss is board certified by the American Osteopathic Association in neuro-musculoskeletal medicine and osteopathic manipulative medicine, and board certified in medical acupuncture by the American Board of Medical Acupuncture.

RITUALS OF CARE

By Dr. Anna C. Gersh

You are what your deep driving desire is.
As your desire is, so is your will.
As your will is, so is your deed.
As your deed is, so is your destiny.
-Brihadarayaka Upanishad [iv]

What we choose to do in this life matters. There is no doubt that how we choose to spend our time while we're inhabiting this astral plane has an effect on our outlook, how others perceive us, and the patterns we set for ourselves throughout our lives.

One type of activity I've been thinking a lot about lately is something I've decided to start calling "Rituals of Care"—those activities we do that include a certain care component—that is some aspect of the labor that feeds into something greater than what it does, in a practical, applied sense, for you.

This happens most easily in labor you do for others, but it can also include the type of labor you do for yourself or your family that requires you to engage directly with the task—something that is done with your own hands and is resistant to short cuts. Making food, scrubbing your kitchen floor, painting your bedroom walls, carrying water, talking to children, writing anything with a pen or pencil. Each of these activities have the potential to become a Ritual of Care.

There is a lot of conversation around this type of activity lately. The language of mindfulness is used to describe actions when done with an engaged mind. Mindful engagement is about doing things thoughtfully, but the language of mindfulness, especially as it's used in a lot of K-12 curriculum content (where it is virtually ubiquitous these days) lacks the critical constituent notion of universal purpose.

Engaging with a task in a mindful way is only a first step. If you ask kids who are engaged in "mindfulness exercises," as I have in my role as an after school program evaluation consultant, why they are doing "mindfulness exercises," they will typically say things along the lines of "to relax"; "to calm us down"; or "to give the teacher a rest," which means they are viewing it as an activity that is closer to nap time than one capable of developing critical cognitive infrastructure and an awareness of humanity's shared connection.

Rituals of care are activities that, regardless of the nature of the task, serve to link us to all humanity. To nourish oneself or others through thoughtful food preparation or to be fully present in communication; to organize or clean a space toward improved access, utility, or service; to teach or to provide physical assistance to others; to tend the earth—these actions provide a direct conduit of shared experience to the rest of humanity—all people everywhere have to do these things—this is the nexus where mindfulness connects directly to the human condition.

Recently, three high school friends and I have been clearing out the home of one of our recently deceased parents. This is one of those big, old homes filled with the acquisitions of long lives, a large family, and better than moderate wealth. In short, it was packed with *stuff and since one of us is an environmental engineer, every bit of it has had to go to the correct reuse center, second hand shop, or EGLE approved disposal site. Needless to say, the time investment has already been substantial ,and I'd be surprised if we'd made it through 30% of what's in there.*

The task, monotonous as it is to dismantle well over 500 paper file folders, separating each from its metal frame and sorting the contents into shred, keep, trash, or recycle is, in its mindless ordering, done in the service of community, in the company of friends, and on the occasion of an important passing. This is a Ritual of Care. The conversation and long connection of old friends, the universality of death and time passing has fostered some valuable considerations for all of us.

But I don't think it's necessary to have a big life event to motivate meaningful, mindful connection to a task. In the spring I grow a small garden around our home. By the time everything is planted, I've usually got around 20-25 potted plants:beans, tomatoes, peppers, etc. It's not possible every day, but as often as I can I like to use the rain barrel to methodically fill the watering can and hand water the plants. It usually takes about 30 minutes—not super long if you plan for it, but certainly long enough to render it an unacceptable inconvenience for most people with a hose. When I started doing it, it was a simple effort to save water. Over time, I began to enjoy the repetitive exercise of walking to the rain barrel, waiting while the can filled, and walking back to pour the water deliberately on each plant. I intentionally adjusted the amount of water given based on the dampness of the soil and took the opportunity to observe daily changes in the growth and position of each plant. Eventually, I started to think about all the people in the world who have to carry water and how completely fortunate I am to live in a place where fresh water is abundant, safe, and accessible. Watering the plants by hand has become, for me, a Ritual of Care.

Engaging in Rituals of Care is one antidote to a dangerously polarized world. The value is that it brings us into meaningful mental connection with all people everywhere who, regardless of location, sex, race, social, or economic status, in some way or another have to deal with the same things. We have a long way to go to get to world peace but recognizing our shared humanity through a few basic human actions is certainly a first step.

Dr. Anna Gersh is a lifelong Ann Arbor resident. She is a parent, educator, program evaluator, artistic thinker, and lay-philosopher.

THE PARABLE OF THE Sweet Pea

By Peggy River Singer

When I moved into my new apartment in 2014, I was excited to have a small patio and garden space. I'd always wanted to grow Sweet Pea vines, a vintage classic that would remind me of happy summer days at the lake. And the lovely blooms would please my neighbors and attract hummingbirds. What could be more perfect?

The new baby plants I brought home adjusted quickly, and I crossed my fingers and hoped they would be able to survive the heat and harsh sunlight of summer.

Then came the day when I got home from work and found just a few shreds of mangled stems and leaves. One of the groundskeepers had managed to find the only healthy green plant in sight on that early spring day, and he decided it must be a weed. (Even though it was inside my patio fence at the base of a trellis for the vines to climb on!)

I complained to the rental office manager and showed her the sad, wilted evidence of atrocity (or at least cruelty to plants). The rental office called the crew chief, who sent Austin (a college student) to apologize to me in person. The poor guy was honestly distressed at MY distress. He confessed he didn't know anything about plants and was just trying to pay the rent. I told him I understood and reassured him I was more unhappy with his crew chief than with him, because he clearly hadn't been given enough useful training for his job.

I went out and bought more Sweet Pea seedlings, as well as an enthusiastic-looking Lavender plant for my front door. A few days later I was working at my kitchen table, noticed movement outside and was horrified to see Austin checking out my new Lavender plant in its handsome new pot with a doubtful expression on his face and a weed whacker in his hands! After our memorable first meeting, I could imagine what must be going through his mind…

"To chop, or not to chop, that is the question. Whether 'tis nobler to ask that lady first, or to just

chop the damn thing down before the boss yells at me, and try to keep going until lunch break…"

Austin and I had another friendly conversation – under the circumstances, I'm quite proud of that -- and after that he left my garden alone. I hope he didn't get in trouble with his supervisor.

Meanwhile, the descendants of the replacement Sweet Peas keep reseeding every year. This will be our twelfth season together, and the first green sprouts are already visible on this early March day. In addition to surviving Austin, these tough comeback heroes have survived 100-degree summers and below-zero winters. One year the vines grew so exuberantly that they overshaded their own roots so that most of the vines died. But once again, there was fresh new growth the next spring.

Now, here's the parable: Be like those Sweet Pea vines; grow and flourish and rejoice in who you are. When things go wrong and fate knocks you on your butt, call on your inner strength and keep coming back. Share your personal Light and beauty freely, without expecting praise or thanks.

If you encounter an "Austin," remember they might be completely innocent, with no idea why you're upset with them; and do your best to be kind. And one more thing: don't be surprised if you find hummingbirds coming into your life: they will recognize your Inner Sweet Pea Energy and visit to encourage you!

Peggy River Singer is an all-beings communicator, faerie ally, Pleiadian Starseed, Lightworker, and lifelong writer. More of her articles and channelings are posted on angelsfairiesandlife.wordpress.com. To request a communication session, please call 734-548-0194.

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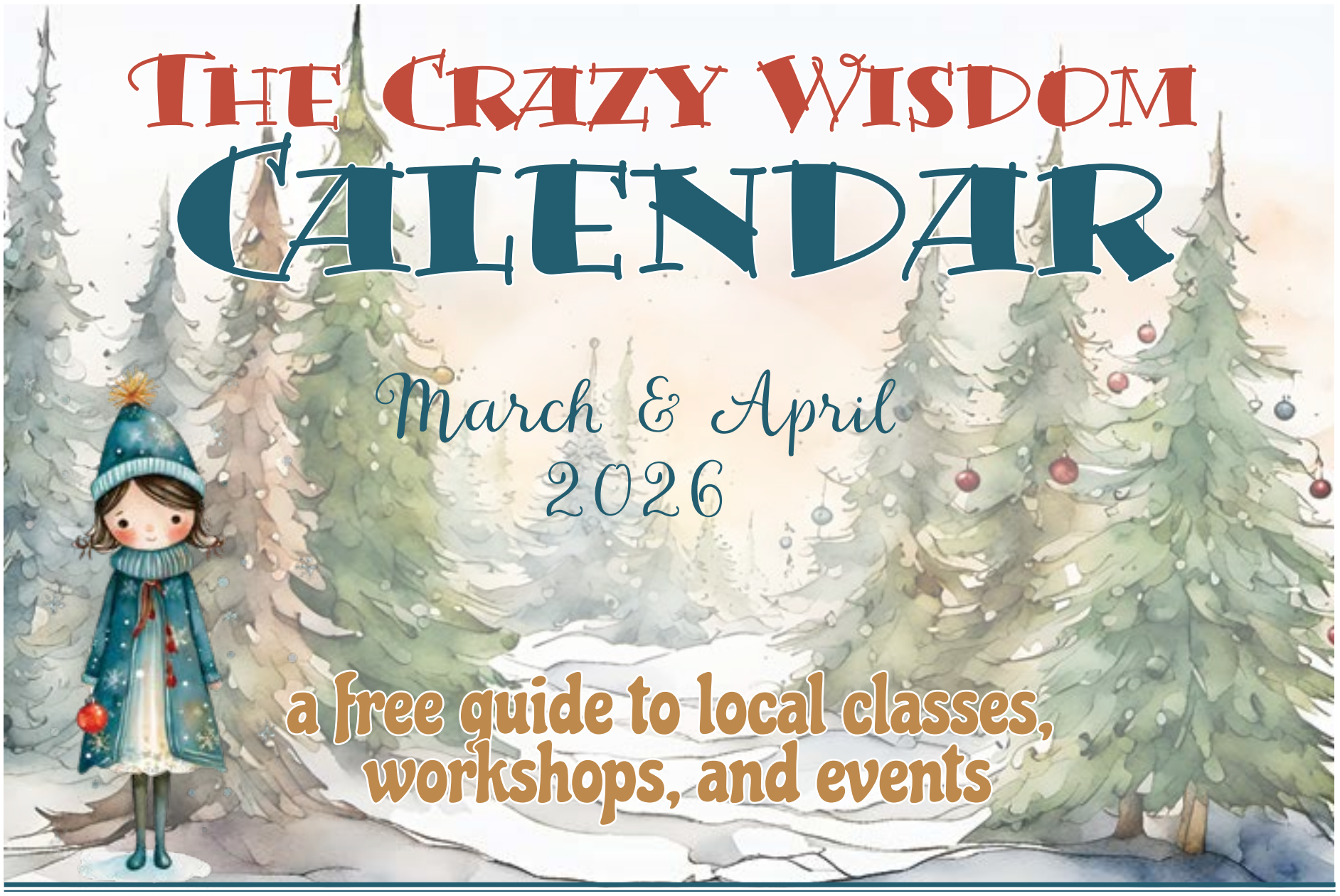

Calendar edited by Kaili Brooks

A Course in Miracles

"A Course in Miracles" Study Group with Rev. David Bell & Randall Counts • Ongoing Mondays from 6:45 to 8:00 p.m. OR Thursdays from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. • Practical application of course principles to daily life. Additional, supporting works are also presented and discussed. Text and study materials are included. FREE, donations welcome. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org.

Art and Craft

Our Earth Rocks: Love, Care & Connection with Jen Kramer & SEL ROCKS • Monday, April 13 • 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. • Honor Earth Day with creativity and purpose. Paint rocks that inspire love for our planet and learn simple ways to care for the Earth. A workshop filled with art, awareness, and positive impact. $35. For more information contact Jen at (810) 772-1852, visit selrocks.com, or angelwhispers.org.

Book Discussion Groups

Spiritual Book Study with Sunny Johnson-Lemieux • Ongoing Wednesdays • 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. • Join our weekly online book study, currently reading *The Second Coming of Christ* by Paramahansa Yogananda. Each session includes a brief meditation, prayer, shared reading, and uplifting discussion. All are welcome at any point. The format encourages positive, focused sharing and a supportive space for spiritual growth. FREE. For more information contact Song of the Morning at (989) 983-4107, email office@songofthemorning.org, or visit songofthemorning.org

***10 to 25: The Science of Motivating Young People: A Groundbreaking Approach to Leading the Next Generation—And Making Your Own Life Easier by David Yeager, PhD* with Leanne Fu • Saturday, April 11 • 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.** • 10-to-25-year-olds are wired to prioritize seeking respect. What can be transformed when we work with that instead of against it—pairing high standards with effective support that lets them earn respect through real contribution? How can Teddy Bear Talk Support come in to help young people thrive? FREE. For more information contact Leeann at (734) 237-7676, email teddybear@teddybeartalksupport.com, or visit teddybeartalksupport.com.

Breathwork

Guided Group Breathwork with Jackie Miller • Sunday, March 1, 15, & 22, April 5, 19, & 26 • 6 to 7:30 p.m. • A group session of gentle, energizing breathing with music, guided by Jackie Miller, certified breathwork facilitator. Experience the power of breath energy and non-ordinary states. 1st and 3rd Sundays in Ann Arbor, 4th Sundays in Ypsilanti. FREE, donations welcome. For more information visit thisbreath.com.

Buddhism

Sunday Service with Temple Clergy • Ongoing Sundays • 10 to 11:30 a.m. • Morning meditation service consists of two periods of meditation followed by chanting and a talk. Donation-based. For more information contact the Zen Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

Jewel Heart Sunday Talks: Ancient Wisdom, Modern Times, with Demo Rinpoche • Ongoing Sundays • 11:00 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. • Join Demo Rinpoche for weekly Sunday morning public talks on a variety of topics that are suitable for newcomers and long-timers alike, followed by a facilitated group discussion based on the morning talk. FREE, donations welcome. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, email programs@jewelheart.org., or visit jewelheart.org.

Never-Ending Lamp of Liberation: A Lam Rim Master Class with Demo Rinpoche • Ongoing Tuesdays • 7 to 8:30 p.m. • In Tibetan, Lam Rim means the Stages of the Path and concisely presents the Tibetan Buddhist path in logical steps that can be learned by the practitioner. With Rinpoche's special guidance, the Lam Rim can help us develop a stable mind committed to enlightenment. No charge for Jewel Heart members / $100 for non-members who are registering for the first time. Give what you can; no one is turned away. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, email programs@jewelheart.org., or visit jewelheart.org.

Nagarjuna's Precious Garland of Advice to a King with Demo Rinpoche • Ongoing Thursdays • 7 to 8:30 p.m. • In his Precious Garland, Nagarjuna offers sound advice on how to gain happiness in this life, individually and as a society. He then expands the scope to include happiness in future lives and attaining enlightenment through practical ethics, great compassion and the wisdom of emptiness. Note: This program continues previous Precious Garland events. $65 Jewel Heart members/$75 Jewel Heart non-members. Pay what you can; no one turned away. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, email programs@jewelheart.org., or visit jewelheart.org.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Buddhism continued...

Dexter Sangha with Whitney Prince • Ongoing Fridays • 9 to 9:50 a.m. • Open to all, these weekly drop-in sessions include a short talk, meditation, and opportunities for sharing, emphasizing the Buddha's approach (Early Buddhism tradition) to liberation from suffering. They are a wonderful way to explore and deepen our meditation practice in community and appropriate for meditators of all levels. $5 suggested donation. For more information visit veraposeyoga.com.

Visitor's Program and Residential Opportunities with Maum Gloria Cox • Dates to Be Discussed with Inquirers • The Visitor's Program is for people who want to spend some time living in a Buddhist community. They follow the daily schedule and participate in programs such as retreats, study groups, public services, and yoga classes as their schedules permit. Cost varies depending on length of stay. For more information contact Maum Gloria at maum1952@gmail.com.

Gampopa's "Jewel Ornament of Liberation" with Khenpo Tshering Chophel • Saturday, April 4 & 18 • Noon to 1:00 p.m. • Gampopa's "Jewel Ornament of Liberation" is a comprehensive explanation of the Buddhist path, including such key topics as Buddha nature, impermanence, karma, and the cultivation of bodhicitta: selfless compassion for all beings. Each session we discuss a new chapter, with commentary by Khenpo Chophel. FREE, donations welcome. For more information contact Lama Nancy (734) 649-2127, email lamanancy@karunabuddhistcenter.org, or visit karunabuddhistcenter.org.

Family Services with Temple Clergy • Sunday, April 12 • 9:45 to 11:30 a.m. • Family Services with age-appropriate groups are being offered the second Sunday of the month, for toddlers through high school. Program includes music, activities, and dharma lessons from qualified instructors. Donation-based. For more information contact the Zen Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

Earth Day Celebration with Temple Clergy • Sunday, April 26 • 10 to 11:30 a.m. • This annual observance commemorates the 1970 birth of the modern environmental movement. We honor the gifts of mother earth and pledge ourselves to the principle of non-harming. Following the service there will be an outdoor celebration and garden planting. Donation-based. For more information contact the Zen Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarbor@ZenBuddhistTemple.org.

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Cannabis/Medical Marijuana

Grow Your Own Workshop with Robbin Pott • Tuesday, April 28 • 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. • Grow Your Own Workshop empowers participants to confidently cultivate cannabis at home using regenerative methods. Over six virtual sessions, Robbin Pott provides guidance through every stage of outdoor growing. Growing your own is a fun, affordable way to ensure you are getting quality flower, and it's completely legal in Michigan. 6-month session begins in April. Sliding scale $250 - $750. For more information visit pottfarms.com.

Ceremonies, Celebrations, and Rituals

Chalice Temple with Mara Evenstar • Sunday, April 12 • 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. • At its heart, Chalice Temple is a space of renewal. Designed as a touchstone for the world-weary, it offers an invitation to connect more deeply with yourself, other like-hearted souls, and the Divine. Whether you are new on the path of awakening or returning, you are met where you are and invited to drink deeply. $333 prorated based on enrollment date. For more information visit maraevenstar.net.

Inai at Madden • Sunday, April 12 • 1 to 3:00 p.m. • Join us as we open a new art gallery on the Motherhouse Campus: Inai at Madden. FREE. For more information contact the Weber Center at (517)266-4000 or email webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

Channeling

Remembering Wholeness: Darshan with Barbara Brodsky & The Mother • Sunday, April 26 • 2 to 5:00 p.m. • Darshan with The Mother offers loving guidance to support your journey. The Mother speaks both personally and collectively, addressing where we may feel stuck and helping release what no longer serves. With support from Aaron and Yeshua, she shares messages of wholeness, always holding each being in a container of deep, unconditional love and compassion. Suggested Donation: All-$50-$140; Single: $10-$30. For more information contact Tana at (734) 477-5848, email om@deepspring.org, or visit deepspring.org.

Children's Classes

Mommy and Me Classes with Kaili Dence • Saturday, May 2 • 10 to 10:45 a.m. • Mommy & Me Classes are held once a month on Saturdays and are the perfect way to spend creative time together! Each session features a special themed project that kids and their caregivers will love making side by side. $15. For more information contact Joanne at (734) 330-2079 or email joanne@whitepinestudios.org.

Death and Dying

Ann Arbor Virtual Death Café with Rachel Briggs • Ongoing 1st Saturdays • 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. • Conversation on Zoom about all things related to death and dying. Participants join in small and large group discussion with deep listening and sharing from the heart. No agenda, no presentation. Open to all adults. Please note: this is not a grief support group. FREE. For more information contact Merilynne at (734) 395-9660, email thedyingyear@gmail.com, or visit thedyingyear.org.

Ann Arbor Death Café with Merilynne Rush • Ongoing 3rd Saturdays • 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. • Conversation about all things related to death and dying. Small & large group discussion, deep listening and sharing from the heart. No agenda, no presentation. Coffee, tea, snack available. Open to all adults. Accessible, confidential. Please note: this is not a grief support group. FREE. For more information contact Merilynne at (734) 395-9660, email thedyingyear@gmail.com, or visit thedyingyear.org.

Death Café with Rev. Annie Kopko • Tuesday, April 7 • 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. • A group-directed discussion about death, with no agenda, objectives, or themes. It is a discussion group rather than a grief-support or counseling session. FREE, donation welcome. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org.

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Advance Care Planning Facilitator Training with Merilynne Rush • Thursday, April 16 • 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. • Learn how to assist healthy adults identify a healthcare advocate, discuss their values and wishes with them. For nurses, doctors, social workers, chaplains, administrators, end-of-life doulas, and all healthcare professionals across the continuum of care. Advance registration required. $265. For more information contact Merilynne at (734) 395-9660, email thedyingyear@gmail.com, or visit thedyingyear.org.

Drumming

Drum and Dance Jam with Curtis Glatter • Saturday, April 4 • 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. • Drumming improves musicality, hand/eye coordination, and cognition, relieves stress, and enhances spiritual joy in all ages! No experience is necessary. Bring a drum or use one provided by the event. $5 suggested donation. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org.

Energy and Healing

Healing & Ascension Monthlies Series with Rev. Eve Wilson • Thursday, April 23 • 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. • Be an influence for unconditionally loving transformation. Join with Master Healer, cutting edge leader of World Healing Ascension, Eve Wilson. Strengthen unity with Higher Self and ground into your body to bring healing and ascension to yourself and the world. Meet every 4 weeks on Thursday live by phone or computer or anytime by MP3. $300 Series of 6—sliding scale available. For more information contact Eve at (248) 854-6873, email evew@spiritualhealers.com, or visit spiritualhealers.com.

Exercise and Fitness

Original Strength Resets Community Sessions with Rodger Park • Ongoing Tuesdays • 7 to 7:30 p.m. • Reset your neuromuscular system to move better! Simple, gentle, scalable movements great for everyone, from recovering couch potatoes to hardcore athletes, all ages and conditions. FREE, donations accepted. For more information contact Huron Valley Aikikai at (734)417-2735, email hvaikikai@gmail.com, or visit hv-aikido.com.

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Michigan Psychic Fairs Weekly Psychic Events in SE Michigan Communities • Sunday, April 12, 19 & 26 • Noon to 6:00 p.m. Experience readings from gifted psychics and healers, and shop spiritual vendors who bring their unique talents and offerings to each psychic fair. Each weekend is a different location in SE Michigan.. Visit http://michiganpsychicfairs.com for dates, towns, and full details.

Gardening and Ecosystems

Medicine Garden Design with Mary Light • Saturday, April 25 • 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. • Each participant will bring in a photo, if they have one, plus information about size and sunlight orientation. Mary will discuss and guide plant choices of common and effective medicines, how to care for and harvest them, and give local resources. $100. For more information contact Mary Light (734) 769-7794 or visit naturopathicschoolofannarbor.net.

Healing

"Making Sense Of" Series: A Problem-Solving Approach to Healing with Diane • Ongoing Wednesdays • 7 to 8:30 p.m. • Are you feeling overwhelmed? Need help figuring out where to start? In small groups, I will lead you through a unique problem-solving process. Topics include Parenting & Communication (February), Menopause (March), and Big Life Transitions (April). Each topic will be explored in sessions once a week on Wednesdays for the first 3 weeks of each month. $150 per topic (3-week session). For more information contact Diane at (734) 474-5700, email connectingthedotscounselor@gmail.com, or visit connectingthedotscounseling.us.

Brain Tune-ups for Saturdays with Debra Metler • Ongoing Saturdays • 11:00 a.m. to Noon • Brain Tuneups are one hour long, virtual, group workshops created by Debra Metler MSW, CHC. They include scientifically proven brain exercises and pertinent information to help improve cognitive functions like memory, focus, problem-solving, and overall mental health. Tune-up your brain with your friends and family! $20/person (minimum of 3 participants). For more information contact Debra at (248) 819-2131, email debmetler@gmail.com, or visit guffaw.square.site.

Intuitive and Psychic Development

Focused Mind Meditation: Teleconference with John Friedlander • Sunday, April 5 • 9:00 a.m. to Noon • Development of sustained focused meditation makes it easy to develop a whole new magnitude of psychic skill and healing ability, as well as a whole new level of clarity and spiritual openness. $15. For more information contact Gilbert at gchoud@yahoo.com or visit psychicpsychology.org.

Psychic Psychology Women's Group: Teleconference with John Friedlander • Tuesday, April 7 • 7 to 8:00 p.m. • For Women Only: Meditations concentrating on women's issues relative to biological energies as well as that of the aura. Some prerequisites. $10. For more information contact Gilbert at gchoud@yahoo.com or visit psychicpsychology.org.

Spring Intensive: Webinar & Teleconference with John Friedlander • April 26, Exact Dates TBD • New material with continued development of advanced core techniques seeking a natural sense of skill in everyday life. Prerequisite: Level 1 Psychic Development Class, CD set or permission of instructor. $275. For more information contact Gilbert at gchoud@yahoo.com or visit psychicpsychology.org.

Love and Relationships

Couples and Family Healing 2-Part Class with Rev. Eve Wilson • Thursday, April 30 • 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. • One or more person(s) per couple or family meet by teleconference class to understand what draws us into families and relationships, what we are trying to accomplish, and how to find greater intimacy, love, and fulfillment. Part II is a private session with Eve to understand and heal dynamics in your relationship or family. $300 for both parts I and II. For more information contact Eve (248) 854-6873, email evew@spiritualhealers.com, or visit spiritualhealers.com.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

Meditation

White Tara Guided Healing Meditation with Jewel Heart Instructors • Ongoing Sundays • 9:30 to 10:35 a.m. • Tara is the mother goddess of Tibetan Buddhism, known for her quick and compassionate activity. White Tara is particularly associated with healing and long life. These guided meditations use visualization techniques to overcome physical, mental, and emotional suffering. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, email programs@jewelheart.org., or visit jewelheart.org.

Weekly Silent Meditation Practice with Colette Simone • Ongoing Sundays and Tuesdays • Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to Noon AND/OR Tuesday from 9 to 9:30 a.m. • This offering is open to all with a willingness to observe the self-kindly and rest in pure awareness. We begin with brief chanting, followed by silent Vipassana meditation. After the bell rings, you may leave or stay to share or ask questions. This is not a class or guided meditation—simply shared practice. Suggested donation: $5. For more information contact Tana at (734) 477.5848, email om@deepspring.org, or visit deepspring.org.

Healing and Compassion Meditations with Hartmut Sagolla • Ongoing Mondays • Noon to 1:00 p.m. • Hartmut Sagolla leads a 30–40-minute guided meditation on a Buddhist theme followed by discussion. Meditations are centered around healing oneself and others and developing compassion. They include concentrated meditation, visualization, and contemplative meditations. Online only. FREE, donations welcome. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, email programs@jewelheart.org., or visit jewelheart.org.

Meditation on Serenity & Compassion with Khenpo Tshering Chophel • Ongoing Saturdays • 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. • Meditation on compassion starts with serenity then opens our hearts to genuine caring for all beings. Recognizing that everyone shares the wish to be happy and free from suffering, we practice broadening our focus beyond our own wellbeing. Ongoing; participants can attend whenever they wish; no prior meditation experience necessary. FREE, donations accepted. For more information contact Lama Nancy at (734) 649-2127, email lamanancy@karunabuddhistcenter.org, or visit karunabuddhistcenter.org.

Evening Group Meditations with Song of the Morning Community • Ongoing Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, & Saturdays • 8 to 9:00 p.m. • Evening Meditations include guided prayer, chanting, and silent meditation, with simple instruction to help newcomers feel supported. Practices are offered in the spirit of Paramahansa Yogananda's teachings. FREE. For more information contact Song of the Morning at (989) 983-4107, email office@songofthemorning.org, or visit songofthemorning.org.

Mantra Kirtan with Ananda and Deva • Ongoing Thursdays • 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. • Traditional Hare Krishna chanting circle for healing and connection with vegetarian meal served after at 8 p.m. All welcome. FREE. For more information contact the Harmony Collective at deva@theharmonycollective.org.

Overnight Introductory Meditation Class with Temple Clergy • The Weekend of April 17 & 18 • 7:00 p.m. Friday through Noon Saturday • This course covers the same content as our 5-Thursday evening class in a condensed format. It is ideal for out-of-towners, or local people who cannot attend the Thursday evening course. Cost is $160/$120 students or unwaged; includes accommodation and a vegetarian breakfast. For more information contact the Zen Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.org.

That Which is Already Awake is the Path: Awakening to the Joy and Unconditional Love Within; Going Deeper into Nonduality with Barbara Brodsky, Aaron, & John Orr • Tuesday, April 14 & 28 • 6:45 to 9:00 p.m. • Each class blends meditation instruction with shared exploration. Sessions include a talk from Aaron, time for questions, and related practice. Together, we remember what is already awake within us and the practices that support resting in presence. How do we meet life's challenges with clarity, compassion, and deep, grounded participation in a changing world? Suggested donation: $135-$450. For more information contact Tana at (734) 477-5848, email om@deepspring.org, or visit deepspring.org.

Days of Mindfulness Meditation with Esther Kennedy • Saturday, April 11 • 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. • Join our mindfulness community as we deepen our understanding of and commitment to daily meditation practice. Reflecting upon our relationships with honesty and courage, we amplify our capacity to be love within family, neighborhood, city, and world. Cost: $35/session, includes lunch. Registration required. Each session is limited to 30 participants. For more information contact the Weber Center at (517)266-4000, or email webercenter@adriandominicas.org.

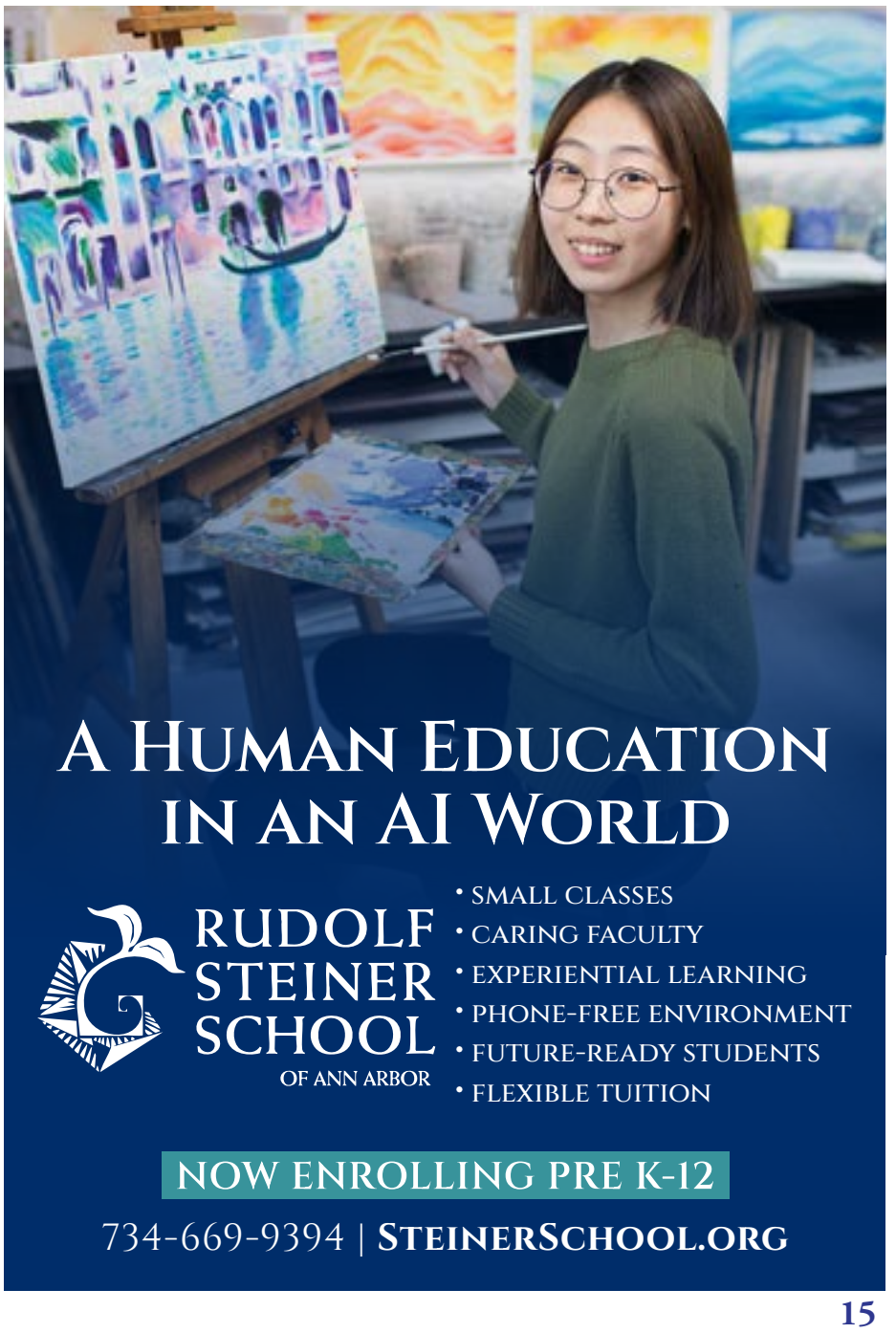
GOM Day of Meditation with Jewel Heart Instructors • Saturday, April 25 • 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. • Meditation is an essential tool that helps develop peace, joy, concentration, and wisdom. The day includes practice sessions with light guidance. Instructors are available for assistance. Silence will be enjoyed throughout. Come when you can. FREE; donations welcome. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, email programs@jewelheart.org., or visit jewelheart.org..

Movement and Dance

Elemental Ecstatic Dance with Andrew Werderitsch & Hilary Nichols • Sunday, April 5, 12, 19, & 26 • 11 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. • Elemental Ecstatic dance is a free form music and dance practice, no dance experience necessary. In the spirit of West Coast Ecstatic Dance, Five Rhythms, and Dance Church. Inspired by Funk, Disco, Ethnic, Drum 'N Bass, House, EDM, West Coast Bass, Classical, Americana, and all music that moves us. ADA supported. $20. For more information contact Andrew at (310) 926-0272 or email andjru@yahoo.com.

Music, Sound, and Voice

Cafe 704 with the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • Ongoing Second Saturdays • 7 to 9:00 p.m. • Live music in a smoke-and-alcohol-free venue, in person or livestream on Zoom. January 10: Nutshell; February 14: Peter "Madcat" Ruth and John Churchville; March 14: Spirit Singing Band w/ Kath Weider; April. 14: Marlena Studer, Steve Ragsdale, & friends. $10 to $20 donation suggested. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org.



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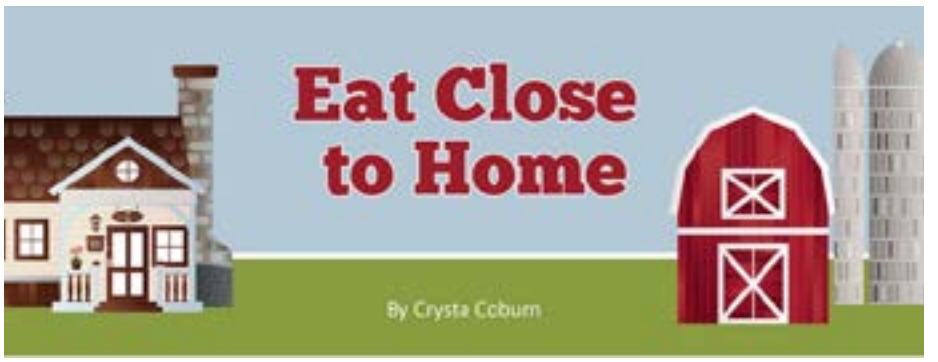

By Crysta Coburn

Since 1999, during the month of November, people across the globe have participated in the National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo), attempting to write a 50,000-word novel in just 30 days. Many popular authors have gotten their start with NaNoWriMo. In 2008, some of Emily Springfield's friends were among those who had taken up this, and other, month-long challenges. But, Springfield didn't want to write a novel. As she told me, "I decided that since food and gardening were my passion, I would institute 'NaLoFooMo'—National Local Food Month—and write about local food each day of November."

That blog is called Eat Close to Home, and it has grown to encompass gardening, preserving, and cooking, all centered around food produced locally in the Great Lakes region. Specifically, its focus is on "foods grown and produced within 100 miles or so of Ann Arbor, Michigan." A locavore (someone who eats foods grown locally whenever possible) could get lost in its virtual pages for hours.

Springfield's interest in local food dates all the way back to childhood. "I grew up in rural southern Michigan," she said, "and my kindergarten teacher's family owned a huge apple orchard and cider mill. We took a tour when I was six, and it was just the coolest thing I'd ever seen. Then we went back to school and were served Washington apples. Even then, that seemed odd to me. Michigan has an incredibly diverse agriculture base, and we're in a unique position to really provide most of what we eat."

2008 was famously (during the financial crisis) "the first time we, as a country, experienced first-hand how fragile our 'just in time' economy is, and it suddenly changed from a 'nice idea' to 'we really need more local resiliency for our food system.' We, as a society, are facing a new crisis with the pandemic, when showing one's support for our local economy has become vital to its survival."

Springfield wants "everyone to have access to good food." She went on to say, "That includes making sure options are affordable for folks with a wide range of budgets and physical abilities. I may not have a lot of cash, but I can grow my own [food]. Or, I may have cash but no time, which makes me a great candidate to support local small farmers. There's also a lot of local food grown conventionally and at a scale that's very affordable!"

Offering examples, she said, a "plain old gallon-jug of milk is almost always a local product. Michigan produces a huge percentage of the dry beans found in U.S. grocery stores. Jiffy mixes are made in Chelsea from Michigan-grown wheat and sugar. Ruhlig's Market in Dexter sells bushels (50lb box) of locally grown cabbage for about $10 and tomatoes for $20. That's a lot of good food, cheap."

What does one do with all that food? This is where canning and preserving come in. Springfield learned how to can tomatoes and peaches from her mother when she was a kid. "When I was in my 30s," she added, "I 'topped up' that knowledge by reading books and blogs." In her blog, she helps readers to feel less afraid of having "too much" food by showing how it can be preserved for later. There are several posts walking readers through how to create and can salsa, make jam, properly freeze green beans, and so much more.

There is even a blog post entitled Three-week quarantine shopping list that details what and how much to buy per adult and/or teenager in the household, then what can be done to make that food last for at least three weeks. This is a practical and useful tool for anyone who is limiting their trips to the grocery store.

Springfield is also an avid gardener, as were her grandfathers. "My paternal grandfather grew a classic Victory Garden; he and Grandma grew a huge amount of food in their tiny East Detroit suburban lot. They let me pick the first carrot out of the garden every year," she said. "My maternal grandfather loved growing unusual foods and flowers, and my step-grandfather was passionate about flowers and landscaping. So, I've long seen gardening as a means to satisfy many human desires: food, curiosity, and beauty."

In the blog, you will find posts detailing how to start a garden here in lower Michigan, which is USDA Hardiness Zone 5 (meaning our lowest average temperature is between -20°F and -10°F), how to build a raised garden bed, as well as tips for gardening with kids. garden researchers like John Jeavons, Eliot Coleman, and Carole Deppe via the via their books. The best teacher, though, is the garden itself. Watching, listening, touching, tasting—keeping notes on what works and what doesn't work for you—this is really the best way to refine your own gardening."

READ THE REST OF THE ARTICLE ONLINE!

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What's New in the Community

SPOTLIGHT!

By Lynda Gronlund

PhD neuroscientist, meditation teacher, and end-of-life doula Amy Pletsch formalized her coaching, teaching, and consulting practice Contemplative Research Consulting, LLC in the beginning of 2025.

"My ideal is to provide and further knowledge from contemplative and neuroscience research, in ways that help people find happiness, meaning, and purpose in their everyday lives—and in whatever stage of this journey they find themselves," she explained.

Pletsch is certified through the Wayfinder Coach Training Program with Martha Beck and plans to complete her International Coaching Federation (ICF) credential early this year. Her end-of-life doula training was through Merilynne Rush's program The Dying Year, based in Ann Arbor. She has practiced meditation for decades and has participated in extensive solitary retreats. She is trained in several Tibetan Budhist lineages, stating that she has been very drawn to teachers that are "open-minded" about all spiritual and other paths.

Having always been fascinated by neuroscience and the study of the mind, Pletsch loved her initial career as a neuroscientist. However, she said, there "came a point when I realized I was no longer listening to my body and inner voice, and I needed to take a break." She dove into meditation, examining the mind from the inner perspective. "Somewhat ironically," she said, "I ended up eventually repeating some of the same patterns of pushing too hard and not listening to certain parts of myself in an effort to 'succeed'." At this point, she realized that she had "learned to ignore parts of myself continuously."

"It's been a process learning to reconnect and unlearn how to ignore certain parts of myself, and I've found that coaching can be an amazing tool to gain access to the inner wisdom that the 'essential self'—the self that exists before we learn social convention—already knows," she explained. Now, she works to bring insights from neuroscience and contemplative science, including meditation, to people in ways that can help them improve their daily lives.

Amy Pletsch

Another tool Pletsch has learned and now shares with others is lucid dreaming. "Those can be very fun, different, and sometimes insight-giving practices as well," she said. She hopes at some point to offer a lucid-dreaming retreat to allow people to explore the practice in an environment where they don't have to worry about getting to work the next day.

In her coaching practice, Pletsch helps people "navigate transitions, make large and small decisions, negotiate life's obstacles, and be more productive in their chosen passions." She provides insight, helps people flesh out what they really think, want, and need, and generally guides them to listen more closely to their deeper selves. She can provide accountability and instruction as well, but emphasized that she does not provide answers, but helps others to find their own answers. "The type of person that would benefit most from me is one who is open-minded, curious, and is wanting to live a life aligned with their essential self as much as possible, even if only by making small everyday changes—those wanting not just to be productive, but to have joy, peace, and purpose," she said. "I find that frequently the person I can help the most is the one who is so busy getting everything done and helping others that they often don't take the time to help themselves."

More information is online at dharmaallday.com, which includes a contact form for those wishing to reach out. Amy Pletsch can be reached by phone at (231) 753-824.

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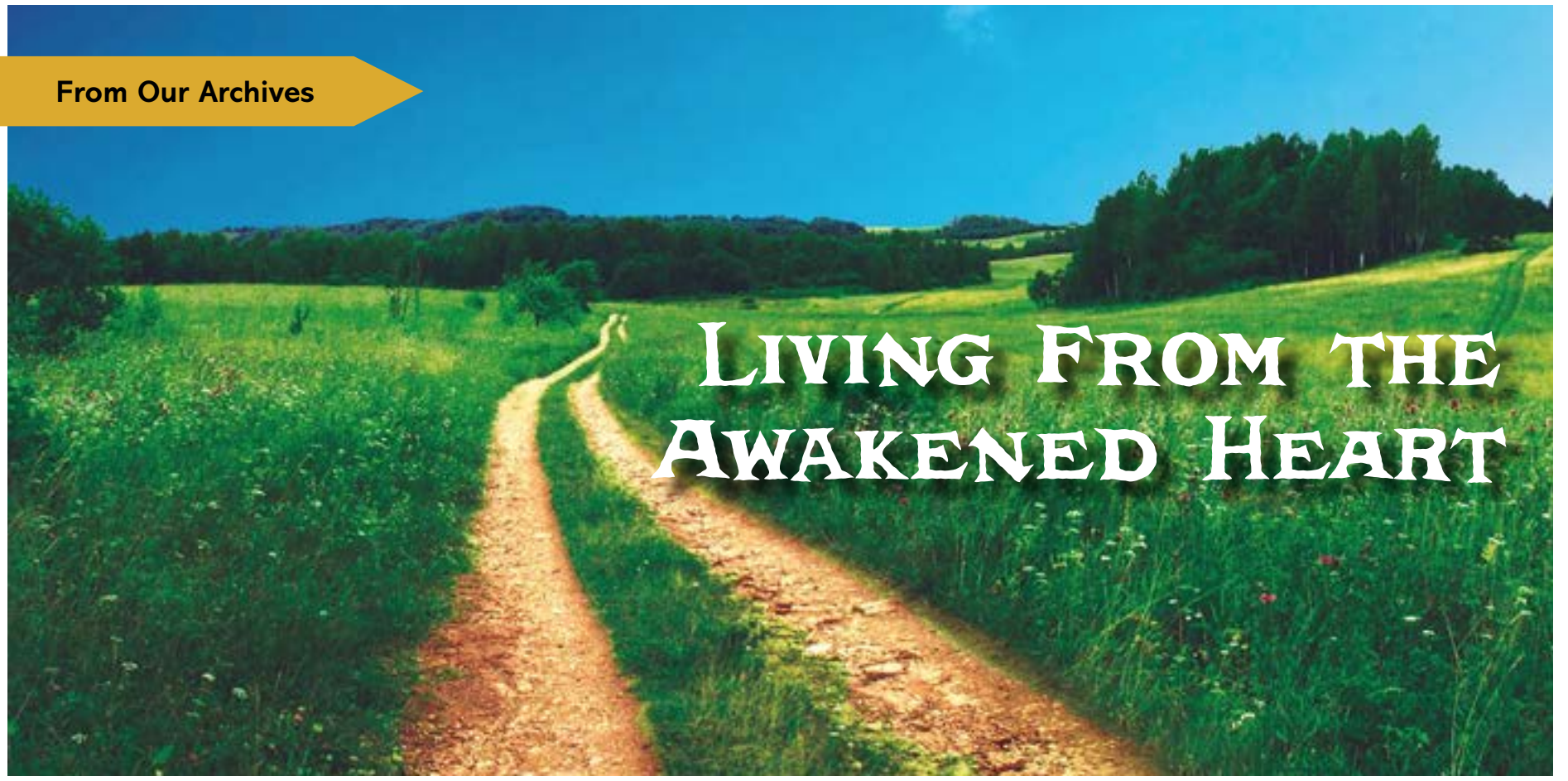

Living From the Awakened Heart

By Barbara Brodsky

Thirty years ago, when I founded Deep Spring Center and first began to teach meditation and to channel my discarnate teacher, Aaron, there were few places where one could meditate and enjoy organized spiritual discussions. The Zen Temple comes to mind, and Jewel Heart had just opened the previous year. At that time, "meditation" usually meant Buddhist meditation, although one organization in town taught Transcendental Meditation. There were even fewer places that offered any connection with spirit and specifically discarnate, channeled entities. Looking at the Crazy Wisdom Community Journal now, I see with delight all the opportunities for practice and discussion in many traditions.

I am glad that so many are seeking deeper spiritual awareness, though at times I feel concerned by an occasional comment in the vein of "my tradition is better than yours." Better for what? Is it better to eat carrots or cheese or chocolate? It depends on what each unique mind/body/spirit needs at that moment, and the same is true for spirituality. All spiritual paths that truly teach love are working in this direction, each with their own specific tools and passageways. Each path has its own unique way of teaching and expressing the same truths, and a person is karmically more pre-disposed to some paths than others. But all are paths to higher consciousness. To me, it feels vital to keep the big picture in our minds and hearts.

Deep Spring Center does not hold to any one tradition, but is a center for deep insight into non-duality, experienced and understood through meditation. The core practices are Vipassana (or mindfulness meditation) and Pure Awareness meditation, along with practices that support the open heart.

Many people are asking the same questions. What are we all seeking? What do we all have in common? I hear, "How do I live with greater compassion and wisdom? How do I truly learn to love my neighbor as myself?" And the most frequent questions, "Who am I and what is this life about, with its pain, wars, famine, terrorism, hate, natural disasters, and the destruction of the environment?" and "How can I help?"

People come to a spiritual practice and community for many reasons. Often the start is either because we are searching for meaning in life, or because we feel worn down by life and are suffering and in pain. Belonging to a spiritual community, where new friends and the guidelines of a formal tradition may lead them into a more focused and fruitful search and practice, comforts some people and offers direction. Others study and attend classes, looking for answers to the ancient questions through the path of the intellect.

There are those who seek psychological help for their suffering, which may also be supportive for a while. However, one may gain understanding of the triggers, yet still be reactive to them, suffering because there seems to be no escape.

For me, tools offered in various traditions have been helpful on this life journey ,and Aaron and I have drawn them into Deep Spring's offerings. Jesus asks us to "love one another," but how do we love people who bring us pain and trigger fear? It's not so easy. From Buddhism, the beautiful Eightfold Path guides me to moral awareness, deepening wisdom and presence, and gives me tools to love. But I was born into a Jewish family and find great wisdom there, too. I am a Quaker, and my Guru is a Hindu saint. All of these traditions and teachers touch my heart and inform my path. So does nature and the immense kindness I have encountered. This blend is my path and what I teach. It seems for most of us there is a blend—the parts will come together with some degree of ease when we understand and follow our highest intentions.

My experience is that we are all spirit, evolving into higher consciousness, as is the earth that is our home. Aaron says his understanding is that our earth is a cornerstone of expanding consciousness because here we have free will: the choice to act out fear-based impulses or to see such impulses arise and know that we can hold to a deeper truth based in loving kindness and compassion. When we respond from a loving heart, the consciousness that makes such choice literally carries a higher energy, a higher vibration (if I may call it that). Thus, as we learn to hold to a loving attitude toward all beings (including ourselves), and learn to be non-reactive and release dualistic ideas of self versus other, we are gradually inviting ourselves, our earth, and the entire universe, into a place of higher consciousness.

Buddhism offers a teaching of "the three kayas," which I find helpful. Dharmakaya (the word kaya means "body") is "truth body," the awakened heart/mind. We may find this truth body in profound meditation experiences where the ego and body dissolve and we experience the core of awakened being. Nirmanakaya is "form body," the mundane realm. We all know this one as our everyday experience. For many, the first intention is to live with less suffering, for the self and others. To do so, we need to understand the ground of our suffering as the belief in separate selves with separate needs. On the mundane level, this is true. We are each unique beings, but is anything truly separate? Perhaps a first step is to experientially understand that the mundane consciousness that keeps us to our separate selves is only one face of who we are. Are we our bodies? Our intellect? Our emotions? Our consciousness? Once we release what we are not, we can begin to open to what we truly are, individually and together, as sentient beings.

Read the Rest of the Article Online!

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Deep Spring Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit. See website for details.

Singing for Comfort with Layla Ananda • Friday, April 10 • 7 to 8:15 p.m. • We sing short, easy-to-learn, comforting songs, many of which come from the Threshold Choir repertoire. You can sing along, lead a song for our friendly, welcoming group (usually around a dozen people), or simply listen. No experience is necessary. FREE, donations welcome. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org.

Community Sing with Matt Watroba • Wednesday, April 8 • 7 to 8:30 p.m. • You don't need to be a good singer—whatever that means. You just need to love singing. $5-10 suggested donation. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org.

Spirit Sing with Karen Chalmer • Friday, April 3 • 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. • No expertise necessary. We will teach each other simple songs and chants that give voice to our spirits, whether high, low, or in between. Let that still small voice inside you rise singing. Weave your voice with others just for fun. Families welcome. Suggested donation of $5-10; no one turned away. For more information visit mfcenter.org.

Gift of Song at the Whittaker Library with The Threshold Choir of Ann Arbor • Saturday, April 18 • 3 to 4:30 p.m. • Experience loving song wherever you are in life's journey. As you sit or recline, the Threshold Singers share peaceful, soothing music to bring you comfort and support in meeting life's challenges. We then invite you to quietly sing along to a few of our songs. Please arrive before 3 p.m. to park and settle in. FREE, donations accepted. For more information contact the Threshold Choir at (734) 531-7960, email thresholdofaa@gmail.com, or visit thresholdchoirofannarbor.org.

Nutrition and Food Medicine

Nutritionar with Valarie Thomas • Wednesday, April 8 & 22 • 6:30 to 7:10 p.m. • During a Nutritionar(TM) presentation you will learn about a curated number of nutrients in each food that are scientifically found to give health and wellness support to your bodily operations. Nutritionar(TM) food subjects will change monthly. $20 per person, $15 each for a pair. For more information contact Valarie at ChE4theEarth@gmail.com.

Food Over Medicine Club with Barbara Bowman • Tuesday, April 14 • 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. • Monthly meeting open to anyone interested in learning more about how to use whole food plant-based meals to improve your health. Bring your lunch and sample new recipes. FREE. For more information contact Barbara at (734) 478-4263 or email barbara@health-yourself-well.org.

Pagan Spirituality

Witches Night Out with Moira Finkle at Crazy Wisdom • Wednesday, April 8 • 6 to 8:00 p.m. • Join like-minded individuals on the second Wednesday of each month to discuss upcoming events, share topics of interest, and answer questions. This is a judgment-free zone, open to everyone! We head downstairs to shop at 8 p.m. Come to share, listen, learn, and enjoy the gorgeous new space. Everyone is welcome! FREE. For more information contact Moira at mopayne@umich.edu.

Women's Goddess Gathering with Chandra Mitchel • Wednesday, April 15 • 6 to 8:30 p.m. • The women's goddess circle is a monthly meet up for Maven/Late Millennial/GenX+women. Everyone is welcome, but topics will center around these ages & stages. Join our Facebook group, @ CrazyWisdomGoddessCircle, for details on each month's topics, activities, and after discussion. For more information contact Chandra at chandra@crazywisdombookstore.com.

Parenting

A Book Discussion of *No Bad Kids: Toddler Discipline Without Shame* by Janet Lansbury with Leanne Fu • Saturday, April 25 • 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. • Explore topics including viewing misbehavior as communication about unmet needs, sportscasting (the helpful, non-judgmental account adults are advised to give of their children's play-by-play), calm respectful limit-setting, and the importance of acknowledging, validating, and an "all feelings allowed" attitude. FREE. For more information contact Leeann at (734) 237-7676, email teddybear@teddybeartalksupport.com, or visit teddybeartalksupport.com.

Peace

Peace Generator with Craig Harvey • Friday, April 17 • 7 to 9:00 p.m. • Join our silent circle, in person and on Zoom, as we meditate on and pray for healing, miracles, and peace within ourselves and across the globe. Drop in at any time during this event. FREE, donations welcome. For more information contact Craig at peacegenerator2001@gmail.com.

Personal Growth

Mindful Self-Compassion with Lama Nancy Burks • Saturday, April 11 • Noon to 1:00 p.m. • This experiential workshop focuses on increasing our awareness of our own unhealthy patterns relating to ourselves. Research in recent years

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Personal Growth continued...

Inner Alignment Rewiring Coaching with Barbara Bowman • Friday, April 10 & May 8 • 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. • A six-week program designed to help you calm your nervous system and get you off the endless treadmill of fatigue, stress, and worry. This multidisciplinary series incorporates sessions with movement, massage, meditation, and muscle testing. $388. Contact Barbara at (734) 478-4263 or email barbara@health-yourself-well.org.

Growing in Radiance with Kathleen Duffy • Sunday, April 26th at 6:30 p.m. through Wednesday, April 29 at 3:30 p.m. • During this retreat we will read and pray with some of Teilhard's most beautiful mystical essays in which he shares with us the inner glow that throughout his life drew him more deeply into an encounter with the living presence of Christ incarnate in matter. Cost: Commuter $125: (includes lunch) | Double occupancy: $225 (includes all meals) Single occupancy: $325 (includes all meals). For more information contact the Weber Center at (517)266-4000 or email webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

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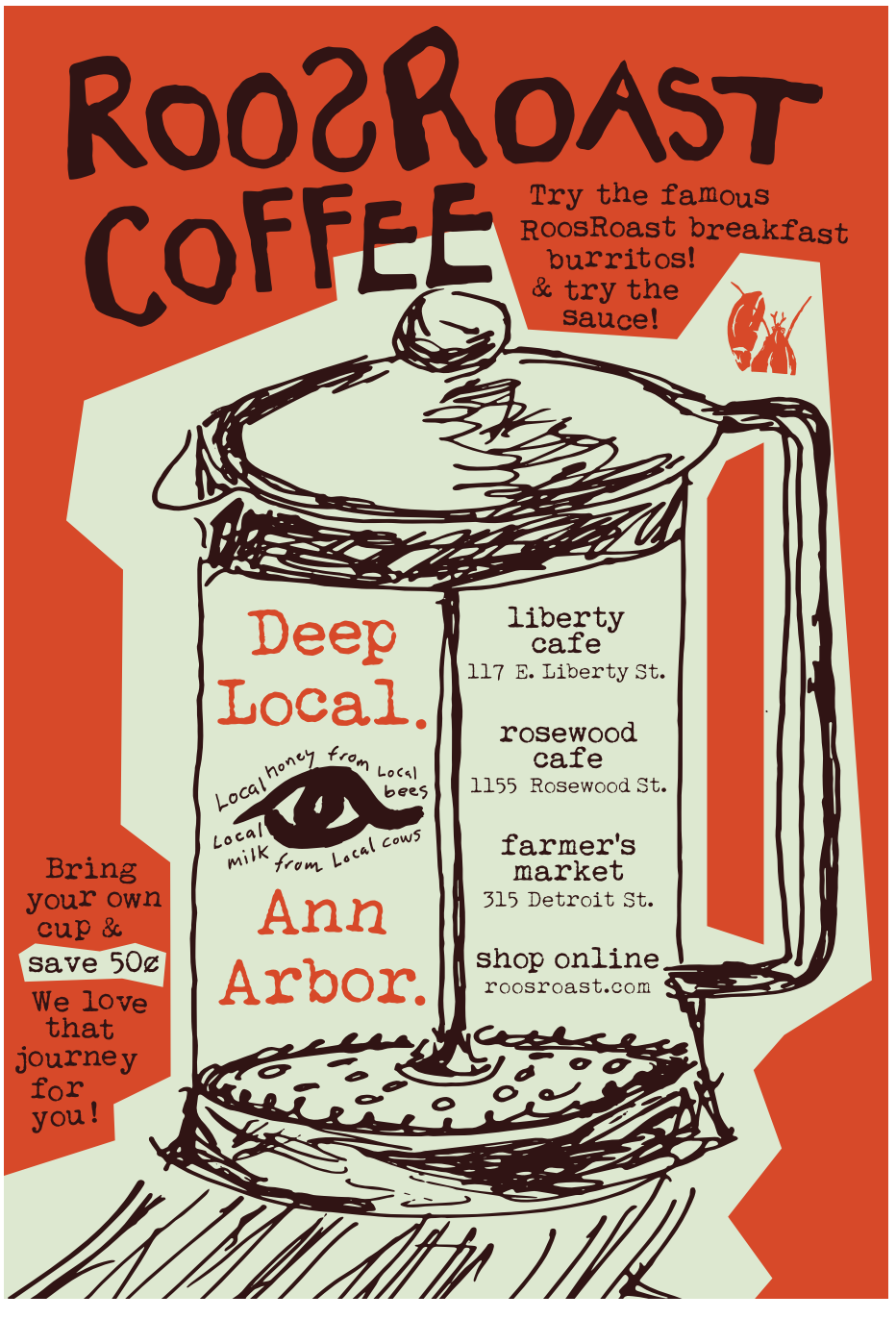

Reiki

Usui System of Reiki Healing: First Degree with Suzy Wienckowski • Saturday, April 25 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. & Sunday, April 26 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. • Reiki is a hands-on healing practice that promotes balance of the body/mind/spirit allowing you to feel and function better. Reiki is an invaluable resource for self-care and for bringing healing touch to others. Class includes, Reiki history, spiritual precepts, treatment form for yourself and others, and individual initiations. $200. For more information contact Suzy at (734) 476-7958 or email SuzyReiki@aol.com.

Retreats

Day of Mindfulness with Emily Adama • Sunday, April 12 • 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • Immersed in nature, we will be supported by time-honored practices, the presence of other practitioners, and themed readings exploring key mindfulness teachings. Most of the day will be in guided silence; however, the day will begin and end with optional sharing and reflection with the group. Suggested price is $80; 5 price options between $45-110. For more information contact Emily at hello@earthwellretreat.com or visit earthwellretreat.com.

Inner Peace Retreat with Song of the Morning Community • Friday, April 10 through Sunday, April 12 • Retreat into a peaceful forest setting for meditation, devotion, gentle Hatha Yoga, and quiet reflection. Guided practices and warm community help you recharge and reconnect with your true nature, inspired by Paramahansa Yogananda's timeless teachings. $108. Lodging fees vary by accommodation and include all meals. For more information contact Song of the Morning at (989) 983-4107, email office@songofthemorning.org, or visit songofthemorning.org.

Four-day Spring Retreat: Yongmaeng Jeongjin: with Temple Clergy • Wednesday, April 8 through Sunday, April 12 • This retreat is an intensive period of Zen practice geared toward the experienced student. Cost is $60/day, $50/day for members. For more information contact the Zen Temple at (734) 761-6520 or email annarborzentemple@gmail.org.

Salons at Crazy Wisdom

Crazy Wisdom Salon Series—Sages of Ann Arbor • An Evening with Wasentha Young, Tai Chi Master and Founder/Director of the Peaceful Dragon School of Tai Chi, in Conversation with Bill Zirinsky of Crazy Wisdom • Wednesday, April 15 at 7pm • What's on your mind these days, Wasentha Young, what's in your heart, what have you relished, what's been really hard, what matters? Wasentha Young will talk about her life's journey and life's work, and the wisdom she's derived over 50 years of practicing and 35 years of teaching Tai Chi. Free. For more info, contact Bill at: billz@crazywisdom.net.

Crazy Wisdom Salon Series—Sages of Ann Arbor • An Evening with Haju Sunim, Resident Priest of the Zen Buddhist Temple of Ann Arbor, in Conversation with Bill Zirinsky of Crazy Wisdom • Wednesday, date TBA at 7pm • What's on your mind, Haju Sunim, what's in your heart, what have you relished, what's been really hard, what matters? Haju Sunim will talk about the evolution of the Zen Temple over the last 40+ years, and her own life's journey. Free. For more info, contact Bill at: billz@crazywisdom.net.

Shamanism

Shamanic Sound Journey: Cacao with Mary Ledvina • Sunday, April 12 • 2 to 4:00 p.m. • Experience the healing, guidance, and interconnection of this shamanic journey, after drinking cacao, which enhances the spiritual connection. Arrive 15 minutes early. Doors will be locked at 2:15 pm. For more information contact Mary at (734) 646-9161, email maryledvina@gmail.com, or visit maryledvina.com.

Shamanic Journeying Circle with Judy Liu Ramsey • Thursday, April 2 & 16 • 7 to 8:30 p.m. • Explore your inner world, do your inner work in a community of practitioners who will welcome and support your process. Required: shamanic journeying skill. Class is online via Zoom. First journey circle is free. $25 per session or $40 per month. For more information contact Judy Ramsey at info@judyramsey.net or visit judyramsey.net.

Medicine for the Earth: Healing with Spiritual Light with Judy Liu Ramsey • Wednesday, April 1 & 8 • 7 to 9:00 p.m. • 6-week session. Explore the

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Residential Retreat and Workshop Space Available for Group and Personal Retreats
TCRC also serves as a retreat place for other like-minded individuals, sincere spiritual seeker and organizations offering workshops and retreats for practitioners of their own. Contact us for more information on available residential retreat space.

Work-Exchange and Volunteers Program
Triple Crane is growing it's work exchange program. We are looking for committed and talented individuals to help co-create a thriving practice community. Visit our work-exchange and volunteer programs website page.

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The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

depth of your own inner light and connection with all relations. Transform the energy behind toxic thoughts and achieve balance in yourself and harmony in your world. Learn how to heal yourself, your community and your environment. Suggested reading: *Medicine for the Earth* by Sandra Ingerman. Class is online via Zoom. $440/$220 for repeating students. For more information contact Judy Ramsey at info@judyramsey.net or visit judyramsey.net.

Shamanic Gardening with Judy Liu Ramsey • Saturday, April 11 • 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • From vision to harvest, take steps to manifest your life dreams and goals through shamanic gardening. Learn how to work with blocks and challenges so that everything contributes to your growth and synchronizes with your own pace and flow. The class is taught via Zoom. $160/$80 for repeating students. For more information contact Judy Ramsey at info@judyramsey.net or visit judyramsey.net.

Introduction to Journeying with Connie Lee Eiland • Sunday, April 12 • 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. • 6 hr. class includes power animal retrieval and journeys to upper, lower, and middle worlds. Journeying is done with drums and rattles. $100 until March 28, then $125. For more information contact Connie at (248) 809-3230, email clshebear7@gmail.com, or visit shamanicteachers.com.

Ancestors: The Power Within with Judy Liu Ramsey • Saturday, April 25 & Sunday, April 26, • 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. • Ancestors can be powerful allies in your practice and healing our ancestral lines can help us heal ourselves and our families. Deepen your connection with the grandmothers and grandfathers in ceremony, in initiation, and in the shamanic journey. Prerequisite: basic journeying skills. The class will be taught online via Zoom. $220/$110 for repeating students. For more information contact Judy Ramsey at info@judyramsey.net or visit judyramsey.net.

Spiritual Development

Sufi Gathering • Ongoing Tuesdays • 7 to 8:00 p.m. • An evening of discussion and Sufi chanting on Zoom. For more information visit interfaithspirit.org.

Humans: Divine Co-creators in the Cosmos with Barbara Brodsky, Aaron, Colette Simone, & Yeshua • Saturday, April 18 • 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. • An introduction to deepening our understanding of the vastness of the multidimensional cosmos and how we can begin to bring the gifts of the human to this inter-cosmos collective. Expanding on this foundation, exploring co-creation, and the role humans are gifted and challenged to play on expanding positive polarity in the multiverse. Suggested donation: all workshops: $90-$330; single: $30-$110. For more information contact Tana at (734) 477-5848, email om@deepspring.org, or visit deepspring.org.

Stress Management

Get to Bed Challenge with Debra Hopper • Sunday, April 26 • 8 to 8:45 p.m. • Ready to stop scrolling and start sleeping? Join Certified Embodiment Coach Debra Hopper for a 17-day sleep reset combining three live "wind-down" evenings with a guided 14-day follow-through. Daily reflections, gentle accountability, and practical tools help you unwind, restore rhythm, and finally get the rest you've been craving. From $77. For more information email Debra at hello@debrahopperonline.com.

Tai Chi, Martial Arts, and Self Defense

Qigong and Tai Chi Fridays! with Jose Feliz and Jennifer Flynn • Starts Friday, April 3 • 4:30 p.m. • This 6-week series (followed by a 2-week break before next series begins) offers a gentle, grounding way to build strength, balance and calm through mindful movement. $90. For more information visit the Events page at rootsofwisdomacu.com.

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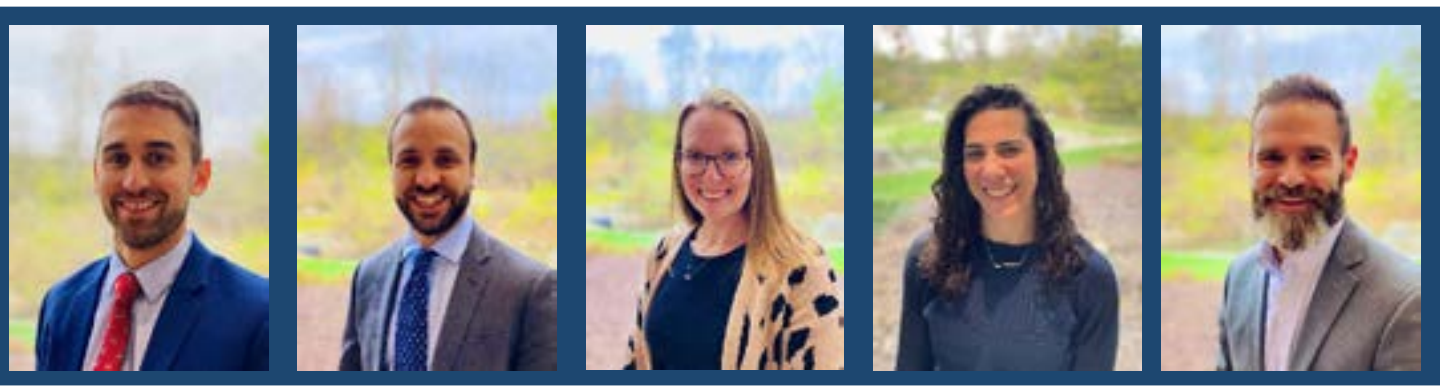

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Theater

The JonBenét Game by Tori Keenan-Zelt with Theatre NOVA • Weekends from Friday, through Sunday, April 22 • Friday from 8 to 9:30 p.m., Saturdays from 3 to 4:30 p.m. OR 8 to 9:30 p.m., & Sundays from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Rae returns to her hometown as a school counselor after the death of her childhood best friend, Molly. When Molly's 12-year-old daughter, Hazel, comes to her, the two slip back into the secret JonBenét Ramsey game Rae and Molly once played—stirring buried grief and blurring the line between past and present. $30 general, $25 for 65 and over, $15 for students with ID. For more information contact Theatre NOVA at 734-635-8450, email a2theatrenova@gmail.com, or visit TheatreNOVA.org.

Work and Right Livelihood

Free Focus Café with Debra Hopper • Thursday, April 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30 • 10 to 11:00 a.m. • Need help getting things done? Drop in for this weekly virtual co-working hour combining body-doubling and mindful focus. Certified Embodiment Coach Debra Hopper hosts the Free Focus Café every Thursday morning — a steady rhythm of shared presence and gentle structure to help you finish what matters with less stress and more flow. FREE. For more information contact Debra at hello@debrahopperonline.com.

Writing and Poetry

Write & Heal with your Favorite Childhood Book: 4-Week Series with Julie Mariouw • Wednesday, April 8, 15, 22, & 29 • 4 to 6:00 p.m. • All levels of experience are welcome. Writers read their favorite childhood books, then write to prompts: i.e. write with a character, become a character, etc. Invitation to share aloud and receive positive feedback. Join us to create healthy community through shared imagination. $180 for 4-week series. For more information contact Julie at (734) 730-6175, email julie@wellspringwritingworkshops.com, or visit wellspringwritingworkshops.com.

Crazy Wisdom Poetry Circle Poetry Workshop with David Jobson, Ed Morin, & Lissa Perrin • Wednesday, April 8 • 7 to 9:00 p.m. • On the second Wednesday of the month, we hold an informal poetry workshop. You are encouraged to present a poem you are working on for positive and constructive comments by your peers. Workshops are held online via Zoom. FREE. For more information email cwpoetrycircle@gmail.com visit cwcircle.poetry.blog.

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Hybrid Writing Workshops with Tarianne DeYonker • Saturday, April 11 • 1 to 4:00 p.m. • In this creative writing workshop we'll look at options that encourage us to show up and write more regularly. Do you know what that would take for you? Creating accountability links, joining (or creating) a writing community, and other options. Beginning and experienced writers are welcome. $35, registration required. For more information contact the Weber Center at (517)266-4000 or email webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

Yoga

Yoga at Zion Well • See Website for Schedule • Zion Well offers a variety of classes, including gentle, restorative, Yin, and meditative yoga. For those looking for more, they also offer retreats, private sessions, and teacher training courses—the next beginning in February. For more information visit zionwell.com.

The Prana Yoga Studio • See Website for Schedule • The studio offers traditional Bikram (hot) yoga as well as Yin Yoga. For more information visit thepranayogastudio.com

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The Yoga Focus Collective • See Website for Schedule • This studio offers a wide variety of classes, ranging from supported beginners, levels 1-4, Pranayama, and pre/postnatal classes. Individual drop-in class: $25; 6-week session: $132; 6-week Pranayama: $90; Pranayama drop-in class: $18; Pre/Postnatal Packages: 5 for $110, 10 for $200. For more information visit yogafocuscollective.com.

Imagine Fitness & Yoga • See Website for Schedule • The studio provides comprehensive classes in cardio, strength, tai-chi, Pilates, Vinyasa, Ashtanga, Yin, and Hatha yoga. Private training is also available. For more information visit imaginefitnessandyoga.com.

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The Practice with Michele Bond • Ongoing Wednesdays • 6 to 7:30 p.m. • Great for athletes or anyone looking for a strong practice. Enjoy increasing core strength, enhancing flexibility, mobility, balance, and mental focus with this fun and energetic practice. Classes are designed to optimally benefit each student, with myofascial release techniques incorporated as needed. $15 if registered for the semester, $20 drop in with instructor's permission. For more information contact Michele at (734) 358-8546, email michele@yogahouseannarbor.com, or visit yogahouseannarbor.com.

Hatha Yoga with Samantha Lieberman • Ongoing Thursdays • 9:15 to 10:15 a.m. • Grounded, breath-led movement that builds strength, balance, and calm from the inside out. Drop-in $18 per session. 10% senior discount. Cash or Venmo at door. Bring your own mats. For more information contact Jewel Heart at (734) 994-3387, email programs@jewelheart.org., or visit jewelheart.org.

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Golden Lotus Hatha Yoga with Golden Lotus Yoga Teachers Association • Ongoing Saturdays • 2 to 3:30 p.m. • Golden Lotus Yoga, created by Paramahansa Yogananda's disciple Yogacharya J. Oliver Black, offers slow-paced, gentle, meditative classes for every level. Each class weaves in brief meditations and spiritual guidance, helping you experience peace, clarity, and a renewed sense of inner well-being. Please call to confirm times and dates as they occasionally change. Donation-based. For more information contact Song of the Morning at (989) 983-4107, email office@songofthemorning.org, or visit songofthemorning.org

Yoga for Healers: Trauma Informed Somatic Yoga with Leslie Pertz • Sunday, April 5, 12, & 26 • 10 to 11:00 a.m. • Gentle yoga for anyone who is a healer—a person who works in the world of mental/healthcare. Come rest your weary heart. Pay what you can. For more information contact Leslie at (734) 926-8590, email peachtreeyogami@gmail.com, or visit peachtreewellnessmi.com.

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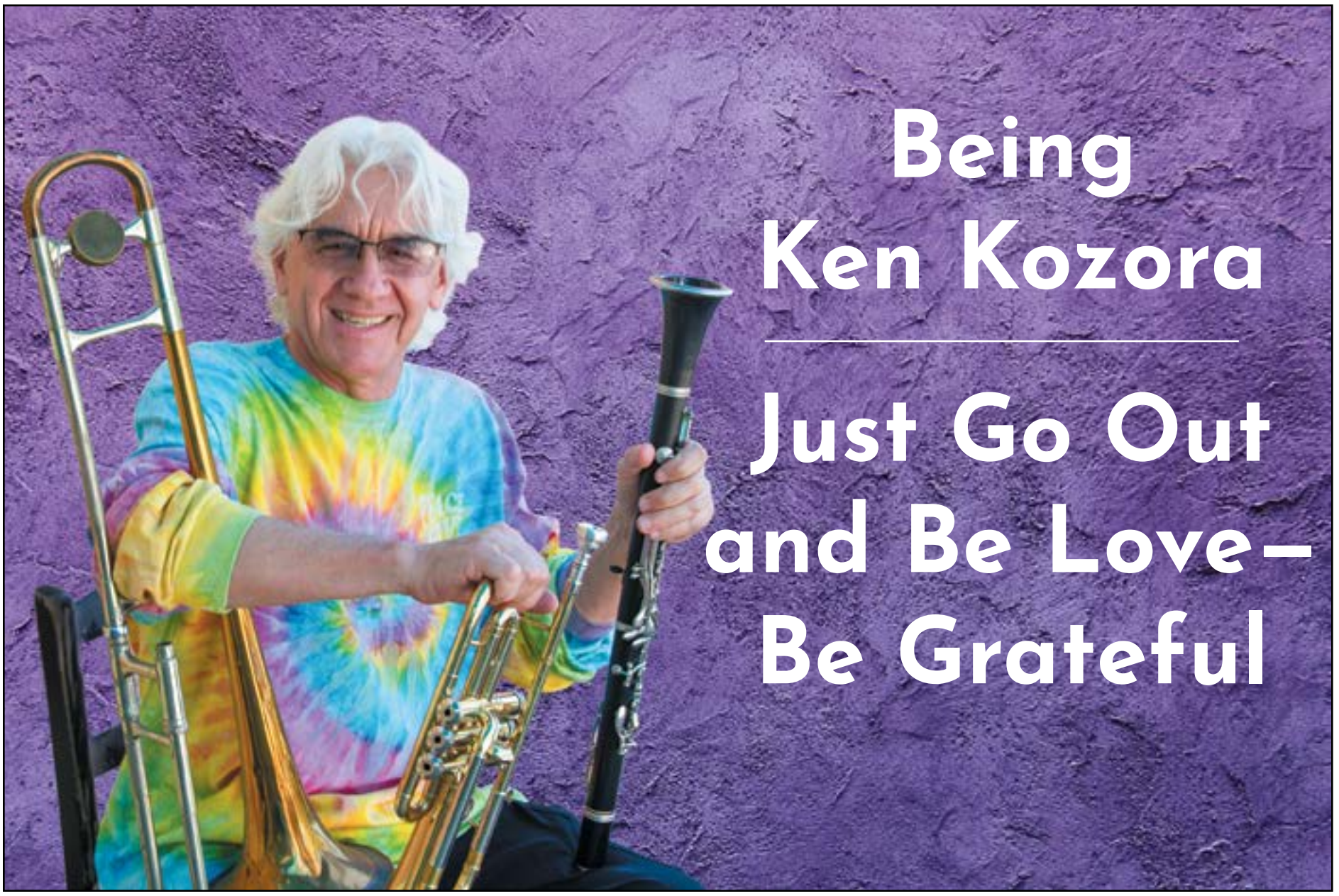

Being Ken Kozora

Just Go Out and Be Love– Be Grateful

By Susan Slack • Photos by Susan Ayer

Ann Arbor musician, composer, and educator, Ken Kozora, is a one-of-a-kind gem. I asked him on a quiet afternoon at the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth, a favorite music venue and hang out, what was the pathway that led to receiving the Love Award from the Artist Advocacy Foundation in Detroit this past September. Our conversation was delightful as he spoke with energy, expression, and conviction.

But before we get to the Love Award, let's flashback to 1996. Kozora had been working all sorts of jobs. "I'd managed a music store for many years and people used to come in and bring instruments like clarinets and trumpets, but we were a rock and roll store with high end synthesizers and audio stuff. We didn't really do band instruments, but they'd bring them in all the time and wanted us to buy them. Sometimes we'd give $20. So, I knew there were all these instruments in people's closets."

A few years went by. A nice guy with a nice music store offered Kozora a nice new position there, but he'd been there and done that. It was the week of Thanksgiving, and he just wanted to go serve in a soup line and help people. He wanted to contribute to society. While the nice music store owner waited for a call back, Kozora debated with himself. How can he do something musical? He remembered the many instruments sitting in closets. They'd get put in the landfill to become waste. His inner light bulb lit, and the idea came to him about how he could merge both concerns. "I thought to myself, 'there are kids in need, and I can do an ecological recycling program!'"

He knew the instruments were there, he knew teachers in the school system, and he knew some repair people. His big idea became clear within 15 minutes after that music store offer. Boom! Horns for the Holidays was born. He made a poster and called around looking for collection sites. Sooner than he expected, he received a bunch of instruments that were repaired and put into the hands of deserving kids.

"Over the years more instruments showed up," Ken recalled. "We expanded to five collection sites. But it's just me with help from folks like the extraordinary repair guy, Michael Westhoff, who's been replacing clarinet pads and repairing trumpet valves for ten years. For me it became a full-time effort, but not paying full-time. Since I started, with the help of many people (it takes a village) I've probably collected, refurbished, and redistributed well over a thousand instruments. That's not tons, but it is for one little local program. Instruments find their way to me. I don't own them," Ken told me. "I just pass them through and into the hands of kids."

Kozora knew it was important for kids to have instruments. It wasn't until a few years into the program that he realized his motivation for it, beyond what he was conscious of. As he was being interviewed by The Ann Arbor News about the program, the journalist asked how he got started. A memory revealed itself in that moment. "I remembered in fifth grade, somebody had donated an instrument to the school. We couldn't afford an instrument. When I was telling him this I started crying. I was like, full circle, right?"

Kozora knew it was important for kids to have instruments. It wasn't until a few years into the program that he realized his motivation for it, beyond what he was conscious of.

People have urged Ken to turn this venture into a nonprofit. "I answer, I don't want to. That's a lot to keep track of. And I say if one kid's life changes and is affected as much as mine was by somebody donating an instrument, I've done my job. Any of us can pitch in if we discover our barrier to doing something. Often, we think it has to be something bigger; it has to be something complicated; it has to be an important thing. So, for me, a non-profit is way too big. It's just too much to do. But helping somebody, like holding the door, or carrying groceries, whatever it is, that's part of it. Figure out where your niche is. And do that."

Four years ago, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra (DSO) started a very similar program called Detroit Harmony that distributed donated instruments throughout Michigan. They were financially set up to market and get the program rolling. Kozora informed them that he had been doing the same thing for years. So, he donated instruments from his program into theirs and a relationship was formed. They agreed if ever a reciprocal opportunity happened in the future, they should stay in touch.

In 2024 Kozora heard from Ron Colone, Executive Director of the multi-state Artist Advocacy Foundation (AAF). For eighteen years the foundation has given grants to artists who provide special inspiration. The AAF was really into Horns for the Holidays which is one of the many things Kozora does. "Learning about your instrument repair program," the grant notice read, "we

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